



North Carolina Association of Regional Council Directors

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Summary: Regional Councils of Government serve local governments in all regions of the state as multi-county planning and development agencies. While some are formally organized as Councils of Government (COGs) and others as Regional Planning and Development Commissions, North Carolina's 17 regional councils deliver results to local governments and their citizens that no other agency can provide. This report accounts for state Community and Economic Development Technical Assistance funds that the General Assembly appropriated by describing the accomplishments and expenditures of each of the 17 regional councils during Fiscal Year 2005-06 and Fiscal Year 2006-07 through December 31, 2006.

Historical Background: Regional Councils resulted from 1969 legislation (GS 143-431) that charged the Department of Administration with developing "a system of multi-county regional planning districts to cover the entire state." In 1970, Governor Bob Scott signed an executive order designating 17 regions. An eighteenth region was added in 1979. One region consolidated into adjacent regions in 2000, leaving the current configuration of 17 regions. In 1971, state policy called for state agencies to coordinate federal and state funding through a single regional organization in each designated region, called a Lead Regional Organization. All Regional Councils coordinate funding and assistance in the following substantive areas: 1) aging services, 2) rural transportation planning, 3) community and economic development. Most Regional Councils also host Workforce Development Boards and 10 serve as official Economic Development Districts for U.S. Economic Development Administration funds.

Annual Appropriation and Reporting: Each year the North Carolina General Assembly appropriates technical assistance funds to Regional Councils "to assist local governments in grant applications, economic development, community development, support of local industrial development activities, and other activities as deemed appropriate by the member governments." In Fiscal Year 2005-06 the appropriation was \$48,950 per region, administered through the Department of Commerce. Legislation requires each regional council to report to the Joint Legislative Commission on Governmental Operations and the Fiscal Research Division the following information:

- a. State Fiscal Year 2005-2006 program activities, objectives and accomplishments;
- b. State Fiscal Year 2005-2006 itemized expenditures and fund sources;
- c. State Fiscal Year 2006-2007 planned activities, objectives and accomplishments, including actual results through December 31, 2006; and
- d. State Fiscal Year 2006-2007 estimated itemized expenditures and fund sources, including actual expenditures and fund sources through December 31, 2006.

North Carolina's seventeen Regional Councils have combined their reports in this document. Part I addresses Fiscal Year 2005-2006 activities, accomplishments and expenditures. Part II presents planned objectives and budgets for Fiscal Year 2006-2007, and actual accomplishments and expenditures through December 31, 2006. This two-part report to the Joint Legislative Commission on Governmental Operations shows the depth and breadth of the activities conducted by the councils. It also shows how councils leverage the State appropriation to secure additional funds for local governments and citizens in their regions.

This report has been compiled by the North Carolina Association of Regional Council Directors.



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IMPACT

Regional Councils bring results to the State and to local governments, benefiting North Carolina and its citizens by:

- Helping local governments confront economic and environmental challenges
- Providing effective regional action on issues bigger than any single government can address on its own
- Planning and coordinating state and federal programs, projects and grants
- Securing funds for sound economic and community development
- Promoting intergovernmental cooperation on a regional basis, among local governments and between state, federal and local governments
- Assisting local governments with meeting state and federal regulations

During 2005-06 Regional Councils brought to their regions and their communities over \$58 million in grants, leveraging \$70 for each dollar appropriated by the General Assembly. Beyond this measure, the information reported here clearly shows the positive impact that North Carolina's seventeen Regional Councils have on their regions, their local governments, and the State.

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